

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE

2001-2002 Grant Amount: **\$16 Million**

DC Department of Employment Services

77 P Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20006

Tel: (202) 671-2525; Fax: (202) 671-2585

Project Director, Noel Meekins: noel.meekins@dc.gov

Mission and Vision

To help youth in and out of school between the ages of 14-21 acquire the necessary education, training and skills to explore career possibilities. It is designed to ensure that young people, particularly those in most need have the opportunity and tools to succeed in the global economy of the 21st century.

Program Overview

The D.C. Youth Opportunity Program is a partnership network that offers a way to bridge gaps and break cycles that lead to poverty and despair. The Youth Opportunity program is a part of the overall services provided by the Office of Youth Programs within the Department of Employment Services.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- Sixty-five young people each year will be trained for future careers as District of Columbia Police Officers (45), Fire Fighters (20), and Emergency Technicians by the Metropolitan Police Department and the Fire Emergency Department both who are dedicated partners of the Youth Opportunity Grant Program.
- YOG "Keeping it real" T.V. Show began broadcasting on District Cable Television in March 2002. The show is a training ground in broadcast media for YOG out-of-school youth associates. Youth are involved in every aspect of the show's production. The show is produced monthly for youth by youth of D.C. YOG. Youth focus groups are used in determining program content.
- The Community Empowerment Equity Partners (CEEP) has an innovative program for Job Readiness which combines their on-line interactive Microsoft training sessions with a Job Readiness/Leadership Development component.

KEY PARTNERS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Action to Rehabilitate Community Housing (ARCH)**- Academic and GED Training-Youth Build-Job Readiness & Placement.
- **Covenant House of Washington**- Academic and GED Training-Job Readiness & Placement-Services for Homeless youth
- **DC Link and Learn**- Academic and GED Training-Job Readiness & Placement-Technology Training
- **Friendship House**: Academic and GED Training-Job Readiness & Placement-Life Skills
- **Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)** - Academic and GED Training-Youth Build-Job Readiness and Placement.
- **United Planning Organization (UPO)** - Academic Enrichment for in-school at-risk youth.
- **Community Equity Empowerment Partnership (CEEP)** - Technological and Character Development Training

